DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 463 115 RC 023 417

AUTHOR Shea, Catherine; Babione, Carolyn
TITLE Wisdom from Those Who Do It Well: Special Education Master Teachers.
PUB DATE 2002-03-00
NOTE 8p.; In: No Child Left Behind: The Vital Role of Rural Schools. Annual National Conference Proceedings of the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) (22nd, Reno, NV, March 7-9, 2002); see RC 023 405.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cooperating Teachers; Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Practicum Supervision; *Preservice Teacher Education; *Regular and Special Education Relationship; Rural Education; *Special Education Teachers; *Student Teacher Supervisors; *Student Teachers; Student Teaching; *Supervisor Supervisee Relationship; Teacher Collaboration

ABSTRACT

Two faculty members from Indiana University Southeast collaborated with experienced special educators over a 2-year period to determine if supervision procedures based on general education classroom situations fit today's special education student-teaching experience. They found that the 21st-century special education classroom is often not a classroom but rather the point of deployment of services that follow students with special needs into their general education classrooms. Student teachers going from classroom to classroom must quickly acclimate themselves to different teachers, classroom environments, and subject matter. Within the first few days of student teaching, behavior intervention plans, crisis and safety intervention procedures, and relationships with other teachers and instructional assistants should be clarified. Student teachers are exposed to multiple teaching models within and across classrooms. The master teacher and student teacher should routinely discuss instructional strategies that the student teacher has observed and should clarify which are best practices. With decentralized service delivery, other teachers or instructional assistants may have more direct observation of the student teacher than the supervising teacher. Those expected to contribute their views of student teacher progress should be clear about performance expectations. Supervising teachers should be deliberate about observing their student teachers when they have the chance. It was also found that Webcams and e-mail could enable more field placements in rural areas and allow exemplary teachers at distant sites to contribute to teacher education. (TD)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 463 115

Wisdom from Those Who Do It Well: Special Education Master Teachers

Catherine Shea and Carolyn Babione

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Weymouth

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

RC 023 417

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Catherine Shea, Ph.D.
School of Education
Indiana University Southeast
New Albany, IN 47150
cshea@ius.edu

Carolyn Babione, Ph.D.
School of Education
Indiana University Southeast
New Albany, IN 47150
cbabione@ius.edu

WISDOM FROM THOSE WHO DO IT WELL: SPECIAL EDUCATION MASTER TEACHERS

Introduction

Urban and rural districts alike often find themselves facing a real and recalcitrant shortage of special education teachers. In a nutshell, too few train, too few seek positions, and too few stay. Those who enter the profession leave for numerous reasons, often believing they were ill prepared to handle job responsibilities. How might teacher preparation change to encourage more to train, seek positions and stay? What might teacher education start doing or stop doing so the profession does not keep getting what it has gotten, namely a personnel shortage?

This paper explains the capturing of master special educators' ideas for improving teacher preparation. Of particular importance were suggestions with regard to changes in field supervision. The wisdom, as well as the process of electronically collecting it, benefited the university faculty as well as the exemplary special educators themselves.

Asking Questions

Field experiences are pivotal teacher preparation components. The transformation of a college student to a fledgling teacher "does not occur on the college campus under the watchful eye of a professor but in an elementary or secondary school under the direction of a classroom teacher" (Henry and Beasley, 1996, p. 2). Therefore, they are common sense targets for addressing teacher preparation factors that could fuel the personnel shortage in special education. Improving field experiences is likely to ensure that candidates exit teacher education programs with the skills and confidence to seek and remain in special education positions.

An important question flows from targeting field experiences: Do long-standing supervision procedures based on general education classroom situations fit today's special education student teaching experience? Preliminary answers to this question were sought through the Electronic Enhance of Supervision Project (EESP), a four phase project underwritten by Ameritech.

Seeking Answers

Teacher educators have much to learn from practitioners who "do it well," as they are uniquely qualified to express how changes in special education services have affected what new teachers need to know and be able to do. Many of the recent reform movements to improve the status of teaching call for professional practice shaped by practitioners in the field (Darling-Hammond, 1987). Asking teachers to utilize their expertise as special education teachers to analyze, critique and adapt traditional supervision models affirms practitioners' shared responsibility for teacher preparation and provides a "reality check" for university faculty. To answer these questions, two university faculty members collaborated with experienced special educators.

Through EESP, faculty from Indiana University Southeast explored the use of technology to enhance its field experiences, especially the supervision skills of classroom teachers with whom teacher candidates are placed. Over a two year period, special education teachers dialogued via webcam, electronic mailing list, and e-mail about

RC023417

various challenges facing today's special needs teacher and how recent changes in the delivery model impact the supervision of field experiences.

Beyond the valuable insights into supervision, EESP also documented the feasibility of using technology for training and coaching special needs teachers, especially applicable to those in remote rural settings. The project explored differences between higher education and public schools with regard to: 1) bureaucracies involved, 2) job responsibilities and asynchronous communication, and 3) the applicability of emerging technologies for use with these partnerships (see Appendix A and B for comparison points and technical issues encountered).

21st Century Service Delivery—20th Century Supervision

Much has changed in special education since the mid 1980s. The complexion and complexity of special educators' work have been transformed and described as "the most significant movement in special education in the past two decades" (Kirk, Gallagher, and Anastasiow, 2000, p. 58). According to the EESP teachers, these changes have resulted in some mismatches between the ways special educators actually operate in the schools and some of the expectations and procedures used in supervision models based on the archetypal general education classroom.

Since the early twentieth century, various stage development theories have been used to describe the progression of teacher candidates through field experience (Piland and Anglin, 1993; Slick, 1995). Field experiences often begin with the student teacher observing students to a later stage when the student teacher assumes complete responsibility for classroom management and planning. Additional theories describe areas such as communication strategies (Shaw-Baker, 1995), characteristics of effective mentoring (Kay, 1990; Portner, 1998; Rowley, 1999) and conferencing guidelines (Henry and Beasley, 1996). Supervision continues to focus on the archetypal 20th century general education classroom:

- One teacher makes the critical instructional decisions for one classroom of students,
- One student teacher works toward supplanting that teacher for a few weeks, and
- One university supervisor provides support to the teacher and university student.

The 20th century supervision models were basically compatible with how special education services were delivered until the last two decades. Prior to the 1990s, the special education classroom situation might have differed from general education in that one or two instructional assistants were in the same room with the teacher. Even so, it was a special educator or the assistant under his or her direct site supervision who provided the instruction. Too, though possibly more so on paper than in reality, shared decision-making between the general and special educator was done when resource pull-out was used. Even with those two differences between general and special education, the primary decision-making for instruction or service rested almost exclusively with the special education teacher.

The 21st century special education classroom is often not a classroom at all but rather the point of deployment of services that follow students with special needs into their general education classrooms. This "classroom" differs dramatically from the archetypal general education classroom in the following major ways:

- More classroom teachers as decisions makers are on the instructional team for any one student with special needs. Thus the complexity of the interactions and sources of opinions for the student teacher to attend to are dramatically magnified.
- Service is increasingly being delivered simultaneously in multiple classrooms and by several staff members rather than by one or two staff members in the supervising teacher's classroom. Therefore, unless the supervisor shadows the student teacher, much of what a teacher candidate practices will go unobserved by the supervising teacher but witnessed, at least tangentially so, by a general education teacher and/or an instructional assistant.
- The special educator is involved less and less in creating core lesson plans and instead adapts them either in advance or on-demand. In some situations, it is the responsibility of the instructional assistant to modify the plans. Hence, the notion of planning by the student teacher is quite dissimilar to the planning done by general education student teachers, according the EESP teachers.
- In co-teaching situations at the secondary level, the student teacher is paired with a general education classroom teacher whose content knowledge is generally greatly superior to that of the student teacher. These situations may be interpersonally fragile and the learning curve quite steep for a novice teacher.

EESP teachers report that stakes are so high in a few of these situations that they find alternative experiences for the student teacher during that class period.

- In situations where the supervising teacher's time is dominated by crisis intervention, organizing and checking documentation and managing two to seven instructional assistants or more, the student teacher witnesses the mentor teacher performing a more-or-less mid-management position rather than primarily planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction. Exemplary classroom supervisors told university faculty that their adult-to-adult relationships were the most difficult part of their jobs. Long-standing supervision models do not adequately address this aspect of special education student teaching.
- Rural schools of the 20th century were hard pressed to find ways to access to resources found in urban areas and universities were less likely to be aware of and capitalize upon the wisdom of outstanding special educators tucked away in remote areas. Today, the Internet minimizes access issues among and between universities and P-12 schools.

These classroom changes are consequential, affecting a number of aspects of the special education student teaching. Three aspects are highlighted in the remainder of this article.

Assuming Teaching Responsibilities

Unlike the self-contained special needs classroom, the inclusion classroom offers new challenges to the cycle of supervision, particularly how the student teacher assumes increasingly more responsibilities belonging to the classroom supervisor. The common supervision model is based on the typical general education classroom situation and resembles a bell-curve. The field experience begins with a period of observation, gradually incorporates increased teaching responsibilities, and then returns duties to the classroom teacher. The gradual curve is possible because there is one teacher in charge and the instruction is delivered to the entire group or sequentially to small groups in the same classroom. The assumption of duties in self-contained and pull-out resource situations could basically follow the same curve, with some modifications made for one or two instructional assistant(s) working in the same classroom. In all these cases, it is clear that it is the classroom teachers' responsibilities and not the instructional assistants' duties that the student teacher will perform.

However, when services follow children into general education, a question arises: whose duties should student teachers assume? Should they take over what the supervising teacher is doing (i.e., primarily crisis intervention, monitoring, and coordinating assistants) or what the assistants are doing (i.e., providing direct services)?

To have direct experiences with a variety of students, student teachers need to go from classroom to classroom, quickly acclimating themselves to different teachers, classroom environments and subject matter. They are often immediately immersed in delivering instruction with no time to plan. They can be unclear of what their relationship is to general education teachers and other instructional staff in the same room. Therefore role clarification must explicitly communicated to all stakeholders.

The 21st century student teacher must have thorough knowledge of policies and procedures from the first day of the placement. The more instructional assistants a cooperating teacher is managing, the greater the number of procedural details that must be "handed over" to the student teacher. Therefore, conferencing between the supervising teacher and the student teacher should be more frequent and focused and the topics regularly reviewed. Within the first few days of the experience these topics are crucial: behavior intervention plans, crisis and safety intervention procedures, and relationships with other teachers and instructional assistants.

Learning from Models

Field directors seek out exemplary special educators recognized for their high commitment to the teaching task, a pattern of helping others find success, empathy, and positive communication styles. Carefully selecting an exemplary teacher is expected to yield strong mentoring, modeling, and supervising. For the 21st century special education student teacher, the long-standing strategy of "watch what your teacher does" may need to be rethought. Rethinking is warranted because when there is decentralized service delivery, the student teaching classroom becomes many classrooms and with a great number of instructional faculty and staff.

When services are delivered in general education classrooms, student teachers are exposed to multiple teaching models within and across classrooms. Teaching assistants and general education teachers are likely to become models for field experience students, whether intended or not. Multiple models mean more complex dynamics. The variety of modeling, often over a short period of 5-8 weeks, may leave the student teacher lacking a solid philosophical perspective on teaching and learning.

The well-trained master teacher who was selected to provide modeling may feel frustrated by the lack of opportunities to demonstrate quality teaching strategies because her/his job is to coordinate the adults rather than deliver direct services. Therefore the master teacher and student teacher should routinely discuss instructional strategies that the student teacher has observed. These discussions should clarify what is and is not best practices.

Being Evaluated

The 21st century special education supervisor also experiences issues surrounding the supervision and evaluation of the student teacher. When services are centralized in a special education classroom, direct "line of sight" supervision occurs. However, decentralized service delivery makes it more likely that other teachers or instructional assistants have considerable direct observation of the student teacher. Student teachers need to be apprised of what role, if any, other staff members will have in the evaluation process. Those expected to contribute their views of the student teachers' progress should be clear about performance expectations. Additionally, supervising teachers should be deliberate about observing and directly evaluating their student teachers, lest they become but "ships passing in the night."

Conclusion

According to practitioners collaborating with university faculty, professional education for 21st century special education supervising teachers needs to take into account service delivery changes that affect three key aspects of student teaching: assuming responsibilities, modeling, and evaluating. There same practitioners believe that emerging technologies could make it possible for universities to capture the voices, wisdom and skills of a greater variety of exemplary special educators. Webcams and email could make it feasible to have more field placements in rural areas and for exemplary teachers at distant sites to contribute meaningfully to shaping teacher education.

For further information about the website visit: (http://homepages.ius.edu/LZ/webeesp/web_docs/).

References

Darling-Hammond, L. (1987). Schools for tomorrow's teachers. Teachers College Record, 88, 356-358.

Henry, M., & Beasley, W. (1996). Supervising student teachers. Sycamore Press.

Kay, R. (1990). A definition for developing self-reliance. In T. Bey & C. Holmes (Eds.). Mentoring: Developing successful new teachers. ATE Publication.

Kirk, S.A., Gallagher, J.J., & Anastasiow, N. (2000). Education of Exceptional Children. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Piland, D., & Anglin, J. (1993). It is only a stage they are going through: The development of student teachers. Action in Teacher Education, 15(3), 19-26.

Portner, H. (1998). Mentoring new teachers. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Rowley, J. (1999). The good mentor. Educational Leadership, 56(8), 20-22.

Shaw-Baker, M. (1995). Communication the key to successful field experiences. In Slick,G.A. (1995). Making the difference for teachers: The field experience in actual practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Slick, G. (Ed). (1995). The field experience. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Appendix A

SELECTED COMPARISON POINTS BETWEEN PUBLIC SCHOOL PARTNERS & IUS FACULTY

Points of Comparison	Participants	
	Public School Teachers	University Faculty
Time to Participate	Outside Workday	Inside Workday
Priority	Low	Medium
Need for Technical Assistance	High	High
Availability of needed hardware and software	Variable	Consistent
Bandwidth Availability	Variable	Consistent
Workday use of electronic communication	Low	Medium
Complexity of bureaucracy	Greatest at entré level (permission to install)	Greatest at preparation of grant proposal

Appendix B
EESP Technical Issues
Desktop Conferencing Using CU-See-Me

Band Width

The bandwidth may not be the same for all school sites. Some buildings may not have T1 connections. Building use is likely to be high during school hours. Scheduling videoconferences for after school hours is advisable.

Computer Hardware

Some buildings have old computers that make it difficult to run web cams. Old computers may need additional RAM to make the program run smoothly. Computers with Win95 operating systems have difficulty supporting USB, a parallel port camera may be needed but not easy to locate. (Parallel ports are easily identified because this connection is about an inch in width and has clips on the sides.)

Internet access might only be in the library or computer lab.

Generally, it is better to set up a static IP number at the university and have the remote sites call into that IP rather than expect each remote site to have a static IP.

Connecting Everyone Together

CU-SeeMe can accommodate several simultaneous users through the use of reflectors. However, a school's firewalls might not permit this option.

Printer

In one case the printer needed to be disconnected in order for the software to run effectively.

Security of Equipment

It is advisable to lock down cameras, and mark equipment that goes out into the school so that it does not become mixed in with their equipment.

Software Issues

It is important to use the matching serial number for CU SeeMe to run software.

Quickcam software doesn't work well with Windows 2000 and therefore some of the system 2000 files may need to be manually removed. Codec and select video features may need to be disabled.

Sound quality

Experiment turning the actual microphone piece in different directions, closer to the face or further away before concluding that the microphone itself is faulty. Make sure the microphone is plugged into the microphone jack rather than the "line in" jack. #323 will let you connect with other things....

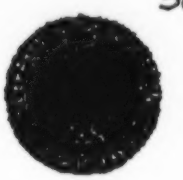
Tutorials

To assist the school setting, prepare tutorials that include a printout of the actual screen for the steps to be taken.

Trial Runs

There are several suggestions to make the trial runs more effective. If possible, have a technical person present at each end. Having a phone nearby allows for calls from one site to another.

To: Velma Mitchell
304-347-0467



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
(OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

Reproduction Release

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: American Council on Rural Special Education 2002 Conference Proceedings No Child Left Behind: The Vital Role of Rural Schools	
Author(s): multiple	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date: 3-1-02

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign in the indicated space following.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to Level 2B documents
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY SAMPLE TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY SAMPLE TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)	PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY SAMPLE TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
Level 1	Level 2A	Level 2B
☒	☐	☐
Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) *and* paper copy.	Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only	Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche onl

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche, or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature:	Printed Name/Position/Title:	
Judy Weyrauch	Judy Weyrauch / Headquarters Manager	
Organization/Address: American Council on Rural Special Education 2323 Anderson Ave. Ste 226 Manhattan KS 66502-2912	Telephone: 785-532-2737	Fax: 785-532-7732
	E-mail Address: acres@ksu.edu	Date: 4-9-02

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

Acquisitions
ERIC/CRESS at AEL
P. O. Box 1348
Charleston, WV 25325-1348
Toll Free: 800-624-9120
FAX: 304-347-0467
e-mail: ericrc@ael.org
WWW: http://www.ael.org/eric/

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the